

by striking “2018 through 2021” and inserting “2023 through 2026”.

TITLE III—BRIEFINGS

SEC. 301. BRIEFING ON ANNUAL TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT.

Not later than 30 days after the public designation of country tier rankings and subsequent publishing of the Trafficking in Persons Report, the Secretary of State shall brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives on—

(1) countries that were downgraded or upgraded in the most recent Trafficking in Persons Report; and

(2) the efforts made by the United States to improve counter-trafficking efforts in those countries, including foreign government efforts to better meet minimum standards to eliminate human trafficking.

SEC. 302. BRIEFING ON USE AND JUSTIFICATION OF WAIVERS.

Not later than 30 days after the President has determined to issue a waiver under section 110(d)(5) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7107(d)(5)), the Secretary of State shall brief the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives on—

(a) each country that received a waiver;

(b) the justification for each such waiver; and

(c) a description of the efforts made by each country to meet the minimum standards to eliminate human trafficking.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 4171), as amended, was passed.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF JERRY W. BLACKWELL

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nominee to be the next U.S. district court judge for the District of Minnesota—that would be Jerry Blackwell.

I would like to thank Senator DURBIN, chair of the Judiciary Committee,

and all the members of the Judiciary Committee, including yourself, Mr. President, for shepherding Mr. Blackwell's nomination through the committee, and I would like to thank Leader SCHUMER for making time for the Senate to consider his nomination, and my colleague Senator SMITH for her work as well in support of the nomination.

Jerry Blackwell is one of the most respected and accomplished litigators in the State of Minnesota. He has nearly 35 years of trial experience, has been named Minnesota Attorney of the Year five times, has argued over 1,000 motions in State and Federal court, and served as lead counsel in over 100 cases.

This is why he received a bipartisan vote in the Judiciary Committee, including with the support of the ranking member, and why I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support his confirmation.

Jerry has always been driven by his commitment to serve others—a commitment that started early in his life. His dad was a truckdriver who started working after the 10th grade, and his mom worked in a textile mill. She struggled with health conditions and was on dialysis from the time Jerry was 5 years old. They raised Jerry in a textile mill town in North Carolina in a home without running water. And although they did not have much, they raised their kids to believe that no matter what their life circumstances were, it was their responsibility to give back to their community. As Jerry said at his nomination hearing, his mom taught him at a young age that “in serving others we find our own well-being.” Those words inspired Jerry's brother to serve as a police officer and led Jerry to use his skills as an attorney to improve the lives of others.

He was the first in his family to attend college. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a recipient of the prestigious Morehead Scholarship. He went on to earn his J.D. from the University of North Carolina School of Law and then had the wisdom to move to Minnesota to begin his legal career at a firm in Minneapolis.

After working at several prominent Minneapolis law firms, Jerry went on to found Blackwell Burke, one of the largest minority-owned trial law firms in our State. The firm was, at one point, the second-largest Black-owned law firm in the United States of America. It is highly regarded by the Minnesota legal community and has been rated Minnesota's top litigation firm by Benchmark Litigation for 4 years in a row.

Jerry is also known for his humility—so much so that I did not learn until after his nomination hearing, when his aunt told me, that Jerry has never lost a case in the nearly 35 years he has been practicing.

I then went to Jerry and said “Your aunt was probably kind of exaggerating?” And he said “No, it's true. I've never lost a case.”

As an attorney in Minnesota, Jerry never lost touch with his commitment to serve others. Even while he maintained a busy private practice, he always found ways to give back. He was widely praised for his work obtaining the first posthumous pardon in State history for Max Mason, a young Black man who was wrongfully convicted of rape in 1920. And he captured the attention of our State and the country during his time as Special Assistant Attorney General in one of the most high-profile criminal trials in the history of our country: the prosecution of Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd.

Many of the pages in this room and many of the people watching today will remember Jerry's argument at the trial and the fine lawyering that he demonstrated. He didn't make it about himself. He didn't make it about some hotshot litigation move. He made it about George Floyd, and he made it about the community members and the police officers who came to testify against Derek Chauvin at that trial. It was an extraordinary job, along with his colleagues that also prosecuted the case and Attorney General Ellison who supervised it.

Jerry has broad respect in Minnesota's legal community. He was initially recommended by a judicial selection committee that I convened with Senator SMITH consisting of accomplished Minnesota judges, attorneys, and legal scholars, headed up by Alan Page, the former Minnesota Supreme Court justice, also known as an extraordinary Minnesota Viking.

Jerry earned support from 25 experienced Federal prosecutors from across the political spectrum, who wrote to the Judiciary Committee in support of his nomination that he “distinguished himself as a civil practitioner and has earned a national reputation as a skilled and persuasive advocate.”

The Judiciary Committee also directly heard from a number of current and former police chiefs in Minnesota who wrote:

We are confident that as a federal district court judge, Mr. Blackwell will approach each case with an open mind and will apply the law consistently and fairly.

That is why he got the highest rating from the ABA. That is why he got bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee.

I am so proud to have Jerry as our nominee, and I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting his nomination.

It is not often that you have a nominee with this breadth of experience, this breadth of support, and also the willingness to take on one of the hardest cases our Nation has ever known and win it.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows: